Central Europe in the Rokkanian perspective

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Abstract: Various theoretical perspectives an political developments in post-communist Central Europe are considered. The paradigm of modernisation and democratic theory are funnd insufficient to explain such phenomena as the renewal of ethno-regional identities, that are typical of the region and sometimes lead to irredentism and secession. lt is argued, that these phenomena can be better understood in the context of Rokkan's conceptions of state and nation building. Rokkan's theory an the critical junctures in history is tested an the retum of Polish parliamentary election in 1991. The map of the turnout in this elections is produced, showing the lines of the Third Partition (1795-1919) in the contemporary electoral behaviour. Other examples of the re-integration of historic regions are offered as well and the consequences of this development are discussed.

While studying the dynamics of political integration in West European societies, Stein Rokkan was convinced, already at the end of the seventies, that the most persistent paradigm of social sciences about the diminishing significance of territorial boundaries within modern societies had already been "shaken to the core" (Rokkan & Urwin 1983:117). He understood how complex entities the modern, developed societies were with their several layers of identity, such as a city, a region, an ethnic group. The fact that those various layers "are historically derived" he wrote, "does not necessarily make them anachronistic, without relevance to the modern industrial world" (Ibid.: 119). Rokkan pointed, as early as the mid seventies, to four countries as dubious cases of social integration: Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Italy and Belgium.

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It seems though that Rokkan underestimated the resilience of the paradigm of modernisation in social sciences. The real shock came only with the breakdown of communist regimes. These regimes were the testing grounds for modernisation theory. Such objectives as industrialisation, urbanisation, mass education and secularisation of society were the prime items an the agenda of communist governments and they were implemented with the lightning speed. But the significance of territorial boundaries (ethnic, religious, historic, cultural) within post-communist societies has by no means decreased. Ort the contrary, as soon as the corset of coercion was lifted, ethno-territorial lines of division have become more distinct than any other cleavages (O'Loughlin, 1993).

Research an electoral returns in East-Central Europe have shown the increasing significance of territorial cleavages that can be traced back to the period prior to the war. In the last Czechoslovak parliamentary elections of 1992, the only all-national party were the former Communists. The two winners, ODS and HZDS drew their support separately from the Czech lands or Slovakia. Within the Czech lands themselves, the regions of Moravia and Silesia gave as much support to the local party (HSD-SMS) as to the winning ODS of Vaclav Klauss. The same phenomenon occurred in Slovakia in the southern districts with the substantial Hungarian minority (Kostelecki 1992, Jehlicka et al 1993). In Hungary, the pre-war cleavage between east and West of the Danube was still present in the electoral returns of 1990 (Martis at al 1992). In the first democratic elections to the Polish Sejm in 1989, the geography of electoral turn-out recreated the century long differences between the traditional regions of Galicja, Wielkopolska and the Congress Poland, the territorial entities that had ceased to exist more than 70 years ago (Florczyk at al 1990).

In this context, the first question to be considered is: how modern were communist societies? The second question concerns theoretical instruments offered by modern social sciences for studies on post-communist societies. The first two sections of this paper will deal with those questions in turn. In further sections 1 shall try to show that Rokkan's perspective might be most fruitful in research on post-communist transition

How modern were communist societies?

In the special issue of *National Interest* on the "Strange Death of Soviet Communism", Fukujama reprimanded sovietologists for developing their own models and methods apart from the paradigms of modern social sciences (Fukujama, 1993). Had they been more familiar with modernization theory and the collateral models of political development, he wrote, the students of communist regimes would have a better chance to understand what was

happening in the Soviet Union. Such phenomena as the diffusion of power from the Soviet centre to the Party's lower reaches, the growing significance of industrial managers and academics, even the growth of "mafias" inside and outside the Party were all but typical facets of a "proto-civil society". In that, Fukujama says, the Soviet Union falls into the same category as other countries that have made recent transition from an agricultural economy to a modern industrial one and have to cope with the vicissitudes of modernity.

However, the output of the Soviet studies for the last two decades shows, that modernization theory was effectively forcing out the theory of totalitarianism as the flagship model of the area[1]. Communist politics was combed in order to find evidence for such phenomena as institutionalisation, managerialism, the formation of interest groups etc.[2]. The Western political scientists were often helped in their efforts by the modern-thinking section of the Soviet establishment, who considered finding the ills typical of Western modernity inside the Soviet Union quite reassuring. Since the result was more confusion rather than less one may think that perhaps some paradigms of social sciences referred to by Fukujama have been wanting not less than the indigenous models produced by sovietologists themselves.

Modernization theory is a paradigm rather than a theory of an exact content. Indeed, the notion of a paradigm is too narrow for the idea which itself gave birth to social sciences. Such disciplines as economics and sociology owe their existence to the intellectual discovery of changes taking place in Britain and France at the turn of Eighteenth and Nineteenth century (Binder, 1971). The idea of transition from traditional to modern economy, society and culture had soon turned into a powerful ideology with its own impact an both social sciences and political developments. In the classic version of the paradigm, the process of modernization was either a by-product of actions undertaken by the rational individuals (invisible hand of classical economics) or it was directed by transcendental forces (historical dialectics) beyond individual control. In both cases, the modernizing outcome was not intended and politics was merely adapting to the economic and social changes. That was roughly the way to explain the subsequent stages of Western European development from the traditional, rigidly stratified society to a more mobile, modern one with all the political consequences that followed.

Later on, modernization paradigm responded to the demand from belated modernizers in their quest for beneficial changes already obtained in Western Europe. Thus the subsequent models assumed that economic and social

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[1] It originated with Barrington Moore's *Terror and Progress,* USSR (Cambridge, MA:Harvard University Press, 1954) and practically dominated the production of the field since the appearance of J.F.Triska and P.M.Cocks (eds.) *Political Development in Eastern Europe,* New York:Praeger, 1977.

[2] For a comprehensive review see: G.A. Almond with L. Roselle, »Model Fitting in communist studies«, in: *Politics and the Soviet System,* McMillan, 1989.

transition to modernity might by planned, directed and brought about by a government. Prescriptions for modernization multiplied in the fifties and sixties when the demand was particularly high in the post-colonial world and developmental models were put on the political agenda. Industrialisation was the prime item, not only for the sake of economic development but also in order to facilitate social transition. The rise of urban proletariat in the predominantly peasant societies was seen as a necessary social base for modern development.

The modernizing function of Marxist regimes was taken for granted. After all, industrialization, urbanization, mass education and secularization of society as well as other items of modernity were the prime issues an their agenda. Indeed, some authors saw the Leninist party as the only practical solution to the problems of belated modernization. That democracy may become a hindrance rather than precondition to late modernization was already suggested by several theories of political development. In the sixties, Huntington summarized the experience of post-colonial development in the unequivocal alternative: ". . . the non-Western countries of today can have political modernization or they can have democratic pluralism, but they cannot normally have both" (Huntington 1968:138).

A closer examination of the institutional landscape left behind by communist regimes should have given a pause to those who saw communist parties as the agents of modernity. Indeed, as far as institutions go, the communist period resulted with "de-modernization" in most of the countries concerned. Post-communist transition has largely consisted of the recovery of pre-communist financial and administrative institutions sought after as the lost threads of modernization. In the Czech Republic, the pre-war Katastral Offices were resumed only in January 1993 to keep the record of land holdings and they must cope with the consequences of former regime's practices of granting unrecorded and frequently informal property titles. In Poland, attempts have been made to restore the pre-war local lending and saving associations (KKO), so far without much success.

If the forces in work on both sides of the Iron Curtain were essentially similar or equivalent in their modernizing impact, how to explain the results so disparate?
There is a conspicuous adversity between the idea of modern society as presumed and practiced by Marxist modernises on the one hand, and the empirical features of developed societies an the other. In the Marxist tradition, social development anticipated a simplification of societal structures up to the elimination of the most persistent modern division into classes. Such idea of social progress informed the policies of communist governments. Communist take-overs resulted with the destruction of the existing societal structures by means of wholesale nationalisation. The unmixed content of mass media further enhanced the appearances of social homogeneity. The empirical sociology has shown, however, that developed societies don't become simpler

in their structures but more complex. Indeed, the more developed society the more complex it becomes: "There will be more groups, more classes, more occupations, more structures, more roles - and more conflict" (Binder 1971). The absence of a complete array of classes, statuses, social groupings etc. has been considered as tantamount to the absence of civil society.

The point of contention is therefore whether the modern social differentiation had in fact developed under communist regimes despite their ideological commitment and political interest in preventing the expression of group interests. To be sure, neither the pre-existing social differentiation could possibly be eliminated without a trace nor the most severe repression and indoctrination could eradicate all economic transactions outside the oficial framework of redistribution. A shrude observer of the Ukrainian culture described how the ever present threat of Mongol intrusions shaped the manners of local trade. Merchants displayed their goods in such a way as to be able to pull up their business on a blow of a whistle and disappear in the nearby bushes. The same manner of trading could be observed in Ukraine under the Soviet rule (Stempowski, 1992).

Moreover, communist leaderships were in the Business of government and that could not be done without a rudimentary organization, delegation of powers, giving some groups a better access to goods and privileges than to others etc. (Kaminski, 1992). All that created in turn a certain type of social stratification, various entrenched interests and countervailing centres to defend them. In particular, the late communist regime was incapable of an effective control over its own territorial administrations. All the same, the defective centralisation did not translate itself into pluralism as some observers of Soviet politics had it.

The ability to stage a protest has been pointed out as the prime feature of modernity, a proof of the existence of civil society under communist regimes. However, the form in which communist societies protested was indicative of something to the contrary. The contagious quality of such discontents, if not immediately suppressed by force, derived from the lack of modern social divisions that might have counter-balanced each other's interests. In this sense, the ten-million Solidarity union emerging overnight and almost without warning cannot be an indication of the existence of civil society but rather of it's conspicuous scarcity.

Communist societies were not class societies, neither in Marxist nor in Weberian sense both referring to market and property relations. Even in Poland, the country most often pointed to as the example of a civil society simmering under the pressure of the communist regime, more systematic research found that the only two structures attracting individual loyalties were "family" and "nation" with a peculiar vacuum in between, that is, in the space designated for the structures of civil society (Nowak, 1975).

The Western experience has shown yet another and perhaps more important function of civil society than staging a protest, namely its role in bringing about *political integration*. The dominant theme of sociological research and theory - from Tonnies and Weber to Rokkan and Lipset concerned the changing social cleavages and commitments that pull the individuals out of their primordial local-ethnic and kinship ties and integrate them into modern, nation-wide, interconnected networks of interests and structures (Lipset Rokkan 1967:1-63). Rokkan's studies in particular demonstrated that political integration of modern societies is based to a large extent an class and other functional cleavages cutting across the more traditional ones, such as religious, ethnic or regional (Rokkan 1967:368-440). His theory received a peculiar confirmation a rebour after the collapse of communist regimes. As a result of the lack of modern, functional divisions, post communist societies tend to crumble along ethno-territorial lines. The same dearth of vertical social structures has been pointed to as the major break an the development of mass political parties in the post-communist era (Staniszkis 1991). The phenomenon of communist leaderships swept from power by the overwhelming majorities in the First elections only to return with narrow pluralities in the next one, is another indication of the want of modern cleavages that would facilitate the development of mass political parties capable of challenging the remnants of the former ruling elites and organisations.

Democratic theory and territorial retrenchment

The First surge of the literature on postcommunist transition concentrated an the nascent democratic institutions and developing markets. These are typical issues for democratic theory to deal with, according to the understanding of democracy as a redistributive mechanism. It helps us to understand the way in which the wealth is distributed and institutional constraints are challenged in the established democracies, with defined boundaries, entrenched institutions, operating markets and social structures already in place. It seems less helpful, however, in approaching the processes of institution building and the major, almost revolutionary, changes of societal structures.

Democratic theory does not address the issue of state making and political integration as processes with their own dynamics nor can it handle the problem of territorial tensions generated by these processes. Such phenomena as irredentism and secession are beyond the grasp of the leading paradigms of social sciences and therefore they are consigned to the sphere of irrational incidents or peculiarities of a "political culture". This means that they are of no relevance to the mainstream models. Since territorial tensions are the leading phenomena of the post communist world, to understand them we must go to Rokkan rather than to Dahl.

From the Rokkanian perspective, East-Central Europe is in the process of *territorial retrenchment;* a large territorial system broke up and the former

peripheries consolidate around their own historic centres. There are many constraints coming from historic legacies latent in the region. But there is also little doubt that Central Europe is undergoing the major turn in its history, a turn which itself will produce important consequences for the future. As Rokkan noted: "In the history of the territorial structuring of political systems, it is as important to analyse the process of retrenchment as it is to study the phases of expansion" (Rokkan 1970:77).

In such a perspective, post-communist transition means the acquisition of a new status by the former peripheries, the process by no means harmonious and fully predictable. The split up of Czechoslovakia has already shown that, under the new circumstances, there is nothing given in the maintenance of the central status by any particular site. To do so, the resources are needed not only economic but also political and cultural and the new democratic governments may find them in short supply. Thus the new democratic regimes in East-Central Europe are being established in a contest of centripetal and centrifugal forces and with all the challenges to the latecomers.

The problem of timing seems crucial and it has already been described in the context of post-colonial state and nation building. Such problems as the consolidation of a political centre, effective administration of its policies and the maintenance of public order may appear almost intractable in societies embracing mass democracy without modern institutional safegards already in place. Rokkan pointed out that the traditional western democracies had managed to solve the worst problems of state and nation building in sequence. His model consists of four phases: (1) Administrative penetration, (2) Cultural standardization, (3) Participation, and (4) Redistribution. Thus in the successful ventures of building a state, the administrative machinery was already in place before the demands of mass democracy emerged. The welfare state usually came last (Rokkan 1975:562-600). In contrast, the newcomers must cope with all these tasks at one and the same time. Further, the new states have been confronted with highly successful development in the West which made the public even more demanding.

All these challenges of the late state building are present again in Eastern Europe. In a way, the dynamics of post-communist reforms repeats the Rokkan's model but the other way around. The post-communist governments must begin with the dismantling of the overloaded mechanisms of redistribution, an the way they loose popular support, which results with the political fragmentation of the electorate and mobilisation of the periphery that become increasingly resistant to administrative penetration from the centre.

There is, in fact, a marked gap between die aspirations of new democratic governments in East-Central Europe to maintain the unitary systems of public administration and their ability to do so. For the process of *external* territorial retrenchment that gave the historic "failed centres" the second (or the third?) chance to reinstate their sovereignty, has also activated the countervailing

forces of *internal* retrenchment, that is, the movements for greater local and regional autonomy within a regime.

Such internal retrenchment has always been an important factor in democratic transitions and the post-communist transition is not an exception. The main reason is general by nature. lt results from the fact that the former regime broke down and the new one is only in the process of establishing itself. Thus some of local elites, especially in the regions of a strong historic identity, try to re-negotiate their position within the newly emerging regime. The process of internal retrenchment may occur also at the level of municipalities. Demands for revision of their administrative affiliation and boundaries are usually followed by the demand for greater decentralisation.

The microcosm of civil society

Local frays over administrative sites and boundaries have usually been perceived as primeval tribulations typical of backward communities and considered by many a political scientist and policy maker irrational altogether. The latter's analytical predilections make them more preoccupied with general features of a political process rather than with its content. Such homogenising approach may leave behind significant political traumas not only unexplained but also unnoticed until it is too late to think of a remedy.

Local aspirations do not need to involve ethnic or religious differences although their presence makes the conflict more dramatic. For example, the Czech municipalities placed an the "wrong side" of the historic border of Moravia by the arbitrary division of 1960 showed some symptoms of a "frontier mentality" in their voting patterns in 1992 national elections (Jehlicka at al, 1992). During the Polish debate an reinstating the intermediary units of powiat, one of die criteria considered was the presence of land registers in the town. Neighbouring towns engaged in snatching those books from each other and citizen's committees were called up to guard them.

The issue of territorial boundaries remains in the heart of democratic process even though democratic theory tends to discard it as marginal. The degree to which inhabitants accept the scope of a territorial unit as an appropriate entity of a communal life or a distinct cultural space (i.e. a historic region) does matter since at the grass root democratic process expresses itself in the awakening of such primordial identities (Linz 1992). What is more, such collective identities may appear a precondition of successful democratic development. The importance of local "civic roots" has recently been demonstrated by Putnam. in his study an civic traditions in modern Italy (Putnam 1993).

Putnam's discovery of territorial differences in the performance of democratic institutions in Italy surprised nobody. The division between the

North and the South of the country as well as the historic antecedents of this division have been a common knowledge. What is new in Putnam's approach is that he made use of this common knowledge in systematic political studies. Putnam draws his theoretical perspective from more general concepts of a collective action and there is no reference to Rokkan's studies in his book. Perhaps that is why Putnam's geo-political explanations of the circumstances that shaped particular types of communities are more anecdotic than systematic.

Rokkan's models are not easily applicable. The very preparation of a data-base that would have met their empirical requirements may take more than the usual time and funds designated for a research project. Nevertheless, the effort of extending his conceptual map of Europe to the East, where it has some major gaps, seems worth taking. In the following section, some preliminary results of such project will be presented. The research begins with empirical investigation of the geo-political consequences of a complex territorial history of Poland. In the following section some elements of the Rokkanian concept of nation building find confirmation in the electoral returns in Poland.

Territorial boundaries and mental boundaries

The European process of mass democratisation in the turn of XIXth and XXth century developed within the framework of the already existing political institutions. In Rokkan's models both structures, that is, the existing machinery of government and the developing institutions of mass participation, are considered together in his concept of *critical junctures*. There are four such junctures in the development of European nation states in Rokkan's model: (1) Reformation-Counterreformation movements of XVI-XVII century, (2) National revolutions of post-Napoleonic era, (3) Industrial revolution of XIXth century, and (4) International revolution of 1917. Each of those junctures created a typical set of cleavages and alliances depending on circumstances under which they happened in particular countries. The national responses to those junctures have been embedded in the contemporary party systems of those countries (Rokkan 1970).

Without going into details of the model, which developed into a conceptual map of European democracies, the important point for further consideration is that the national responses to each critical juncture tend to "freeze" into quite persistent patterns of cleavages, often territorially defined and reflected in contemporary party systems of particular countries. This "freezing" hypothesis by Rokkan coincides with the position taken by Putnam on the persistence of patterns of civic engagement rooted in the history of various regions (Putnam 1993). I'm going to test this theory of "freezing" of a civic makeup as it emerged in the early stages of national and industrial revolution an the Polish electoral data from the 1991 parliamentary elections.

Poland is a good case to test such a theory since at the time of the watersheds in European nation building, the country was divided between three empires of diverse political cultures: Russia, Prussia and Austria-Hungary. After the partitions of 1773-95, the region of Wielkopolska became the eastern province of Prussia as the Duchy of Poznan and shared in the German modernisation and industrialisation drive of the mid-Nineteenth century. Now the region leads the process of economic transition.

The southern part of Poland (Malopolska) went to the Habsburgs as the province of Galicja. The region was largely rural, dominated by a conflict between the peasants and landowners, skilfully manipulated by the imperial centre. The Galicjan peasants were turned into Poles only under the Second Republic and the region has remained the stronghold of the peasant movement until now. Densely populated villages with their closely knit communities were virtually impossible to penetrate for the outsiders, even under communist regime. It was the Galicjan village that defied Stalinist attempts at collectivisation. The part of Poland that was taken by Russia, the Congress Poland (from the Congress of Vienna in 1815) was in many ways a spearhead of the Russian industrialisation but also shared in the Russian political backwardness. After the subsequent uprisings the region lost its economic advantage as well as a meagre political distinctiveness from the rest of the Russian Empire.

In the following section those differences in historical traditions will be traced in the electoral behaviour in post-communist Poland.

In research presented below, data come from the level of municipalities. Making municipalities the basic units of territorial inquiry may solve the problem of shifting administrative and political boundaries in East Central Europe. Further, it makes possible to trace on the maps of electoral behaviour in the recent years the effects of some historic boundaries that had long disappeared.

Fig. 1 shows the territorial differentiation of electoral turn-out in the Polish parliamentary elections of 1991 at the level of municipalities. The national turn-out in that election was relatively low (43.2%) one of the reasons being a fairly complicated voting procedure. Nevertheless, the historic boundaries come out quite clearly. Two sets of such boundaries seem of particular importance. The first are the borders of Partitions. The second are the western boundaries of the Second Republic (1919-1939). The effect of both sets of boundaries an electoral behaviour will be discussed in turn.

The map of the electoral turn-out in 1991 in Poland recreates the boundaries of Partitions with the remarkable exactness. The differences between political cultures of the three empires seem to have "frozen" into the civic make-up of the respective localities for several generations. Under the Habsburgs, the Polish Galicja had its own elected parliament and local government. Although the Ukrainian minority and the peasants were heavily discriminated against,

Fig. 1 Electoral turnout in 1991 parliamentary elections in Poland.

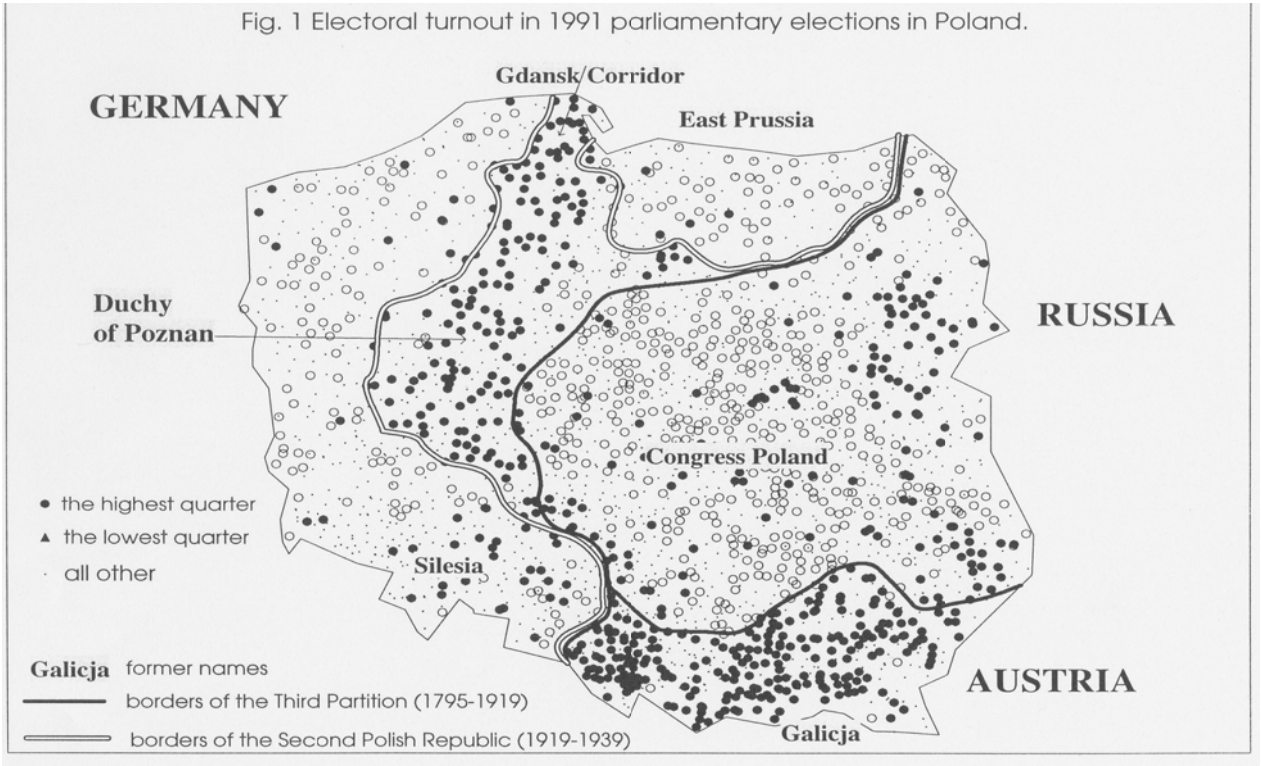


Table 1. Returns from the Polish parliamentary elections 1991 and 1993.

Region	Mean turn-out in 1991	Pro-reform vote in 1993	Catholic vote in 1993
1 Congress Poland	36,1	10,3	6,3
2 Galicja	46,7	19,1	12,2
3 East Prussia	34,7	17,0	4,4
4 Wielkopolska	43,6	18,8	5,2
5 Gdansk&Pomorze	43,1	18,7	1 7,3

those representative institutions gave the Poles the first training in political participation. The results can be seen more than one hundred years later. Electoral turn-out in the former region of Galicja exceeds by 10% the figure obtained in its immediate neighbourhood to the North, which was under Russian sovereignty (Tab. 1).

Similarly distinct is the boundary separating the former Congress Poland from the former Duchy of Poznan. What we call today "race relations" were bad in the Duchy of Poznan at the time of Prussian and later German sovereignty over the region. Max Weber, the great supporter of germanisation of those territories, complained about scant results brought by the policies applied to this effect by German authorities. The Poznan Poles were resurgent nationalists. Paradoxically though it was the Prussian tradition of "law and order", and also the ethics of hard work, that has made the region distinct later on. It provided the administrative class and economic managers for the reconstruction of the Second Polish Republic (1919 -1939), as it does in many ways today.

The map of electoral turnout shows some contrasting patterns within the western territories of Poland, which can be traced along the western borders of the Polish Second Republic. To understand those contrasts, we must go back to the more recent history.

The consequences of mass resettlements

At the Potsdam Conference in 1945, the Allies conferred the territories east of the rivers Odder and Nissen to Poland as a compensation for her eastern lands already taken over by Stalin. As a result, Poland was bodily moved some 300 km. to the West. Some 5 mln. Germans left the territories acquired by Poland either escaping in the front of the Red Army or deported by the new Polish authorities. The former East Prussia, Pomerania, East Branderburg and Lower Silesia became resettled by the Polish population from the parts of Ukraine, Belarus and Lithuania which became part of the Soviet Union. The part of

Poland under the former Prussian-German sovereignty from the time of Partitions consists of two types of territories: (a) those which belonged to the Second Polish Republic, as the provinces of Pomorze, Wielkopolska and part of the Silesia province, and (b) those which became part of Poland after the WW II.

The levels of electoral turn-out contrast quite clearly across both sets of boundaries. Territories between the western border of the Second Republic and the present western border of Poland differ. The civic make-up in the territories acquired after the W.W.II seems week as can be seen from a rather low electoral turn-out (37%). It would be difficult to explain this otherwise than by mass resettlements which affected those territories at the end of the W.W.II. The southern parts of Silesia and the Baltic coast, where part of indigenous communities (Silesians and Kashubs) avoided resettlement, the electoral turn-out is in fact higher than in the surroundings areas, where the resettlement was more comprehensive. A similar phenomenon of a lower electoral turnout in the resettled parts of Bohemia has been discernible in the last Czechoslovak parliamentary elections of 1992[3].

The effects of the borders of the Second Republic are particularly persistent in the northern territories, where the new settlements gave the communist authorities the widest room for their "modernising" agenda. Collectivisation of the agriculture that failed in the rest of the country here was relatively "successful", if the number of state farms is considered. Similarly, the "great building sites of socialism" proliferated here, bringing the masses of migrant workers who settled in the new housing estates, but have never integrated with local communities. One of the consequences of such "social engineering" is that those territories are lagging behind in economic transition, studded as they are with the municipalities built around one factory which finds itself in the state of decline under the new circumstances of market economy. The concentration of such municipalities with "structural problems" in the northern parts of Poland that were resettled after the war is shown on the Fig. 2.

The new regionalism

The main challenge in post-communist transition is coming from such environs of "structural poverty" formed in the rural areas dominated by large state farms or industrial sites that have appeared economically not viable. The electoral results showed that these sites might have their politically explosive potentials as they provide disproportional share of the votes for all kinds of political extremism. There is little local activism in such precincts both inhabitants and their elected councils looking to the centre for help. The poverty of such areas

[3] Own data. More detailed research on the relationship between the size of resettlements and electoral behaviour are underway.

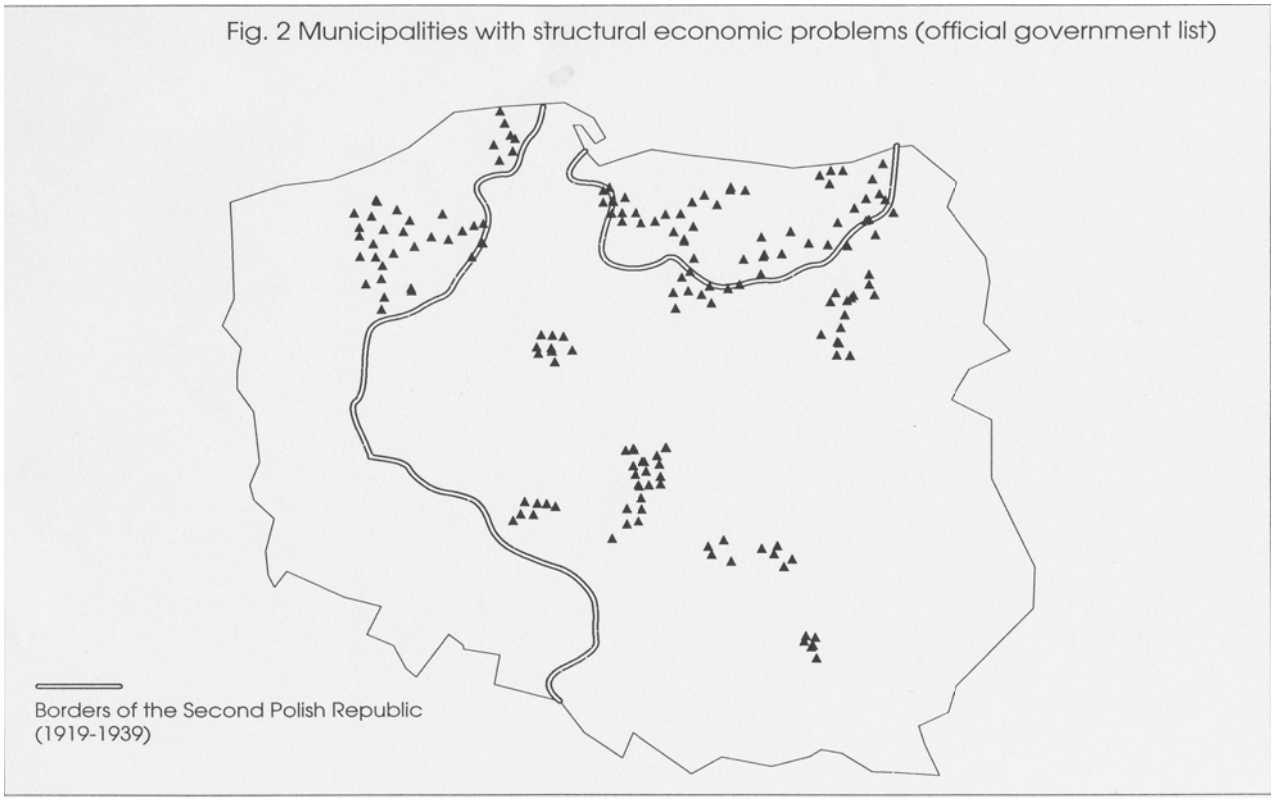


Fig. 2 Municipalities with structural economic problems (official government list)
Borders of the Second Polish Republic
(1919-1939)

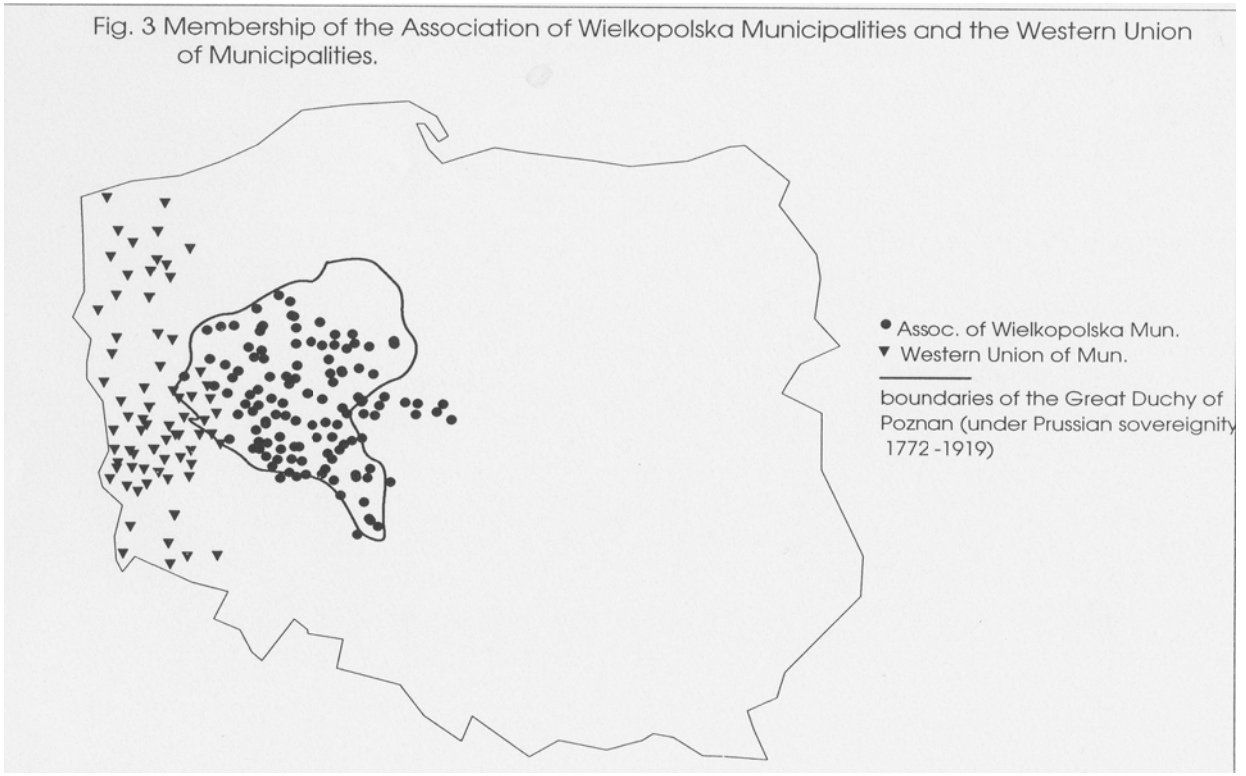
cannot be cured by means of self-government and participation because of the lack of communal bounds among the inhabitants.

Ort the other hand, it is becoming quite clear that centrally directed economic transition has its limits. Capitalism is a grass root phenomenon which can be encouraged by macroeconomic policy but only up to a point. The role of local government in both stimulating the economic growth and providing protection against its side-effects has been increasing in Poland. That in turn may lead to the widening of territorial inequalities rather than to alleviating it. One of the remedies might be a diffusion of local initiatives over wider areas in the form of regional mobilisation. The current debate in Poland on the role of intermediary territorial units has been paralleled by the emergence of regional movements which started as cultural and social organisations and have become increasingly political.

Regional associations have taken various forms, beginning with cooperation between the present small provinces initiated by the (state appointed) voivodes, to voluntary associations of local governments for economic and cultural purposes though with a distinct political flavour. Such associations have been organised by mayors of historic regional centres and cover more or less the territory of the old provinces that had been divided in 1975. There is also a vigorous regional association of Vistulan Pomerania (Pomorze Nadwislanskie) a new region with the centre in Gdansk. Its engine is the ethnic minority - the Kashubs - the descendants of a Baltic tribe decimated in the Middle Ages by the Teutonic Knights. Attempts to organise regional movements in other parts of Poland have so far failed, one of the reasons being a dramatic change of Polish territory after the war. A good example is Wroclaw, a natural centre of the Lower Silesia region, which conspicuously failed to integrate the surrounding provinces.

That territorial diffusion of local initiatives has its limits in the form of the old boundaries still lingering in people's minds can be sin in Fig. 3. lt shows the membership of the Association of Wielkopolska Municipalities that covers more or less the territory of the former Duchy of Poznan, which at present consists of several administrative provinces. Fig. 3 also shows a more scattered pattern of another association of municipalities, the Western Union, created in the territories acquired by Poland after the Second World War. It should be mentioned that neither Wielkopolska Association nor the Western Union made geographic restrictions for their membership. In fact, Wielkopolska Association made considerable inroads in the recruitment of municipalities beyond its historic border to the East, that is, in the territories of little indigenous regional activity. It was less popular though among municipalities in the immediate neighbourhood to the West, where a sense of regional identity seems more complicated.

Fig. 3 Membership of the Association of Wielkopolska Municipalities and the Western Union of Municipalities.



Conclusions

Ethnic conflicts have been most frequently cited as die major source of centrifugal forces in East-Central Europe. In fact, the region has been notorious as a "belt of mixed populations" and as such considered the least suited for the development of unitary nation-states. Territorial tensions, however, may originate from the variety of other sources. For the transition means also a greater diversification, political, economic and cultural, across the territories and within the nations that for decades had been kept under tight control. Such diversification has been fuelled by many factors, from the very mechanics of the disintegrating regimes to the very nature of democratic and market reforms already underway.

In this context, Poland is a particularly good example; after the last war the country became fairly homogeneous, at least as far as ethnicity is concerned. Nevertheless, die territorial differentiation of voting behaviour shows die persistence of certain boundaries that have long disappeared from political and administrative maps. Rokkan's concept of "freezing" of a civic make-up that had been formed in the early periods of democratic revolutions seems a good explanation for this phenomenon.

The question remains open of how such patterns of civic behaviour are being transmitted through the generations, especially in the country of such a turbulent history as Poland. The reason that we do not know the exact answer to this question is because there is not enough research on the subject. Family and community traditions may provide the first set of hypotheses to explain such transmission. The issue requires separate studies, and perhaps can be better handled by the methods of social psychology than those of political science.

There is another problem, however, illustrated by the maps of electoral behaviour in Poland that needs further research. It concerns the consequences of "social engineering" in the form of mass resettlements that had followed the change of borders after the World War II. Such resettlements were not unique for Poland but happened also in other countries and their social, political and economic consequences beg for a more comprehensive, comparative study.

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